

## California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

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University of the Pacific

Stockton, California

### Economic Development/Higher Education and Workforce Development

~ Notes ~

#### Economic Development Discussion

- **Goals outlined in the Economic Development Overview Report:**
  - **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development** – Create a dynamic, entrepreneur-producing economic climate in the San Joaquin Valley by developing a robust infrastructure for new business formation and growth (e.g. “knowledge infrastructure,” business incubators, entrepreneur training programs, seed funds and risk capital, applied research and technology transfer programs, etc.).
  - **Competitiveness of Target Industries** - Create regional, comparative advantage for target industries by connecting clusters of businesses throughout the region to one another and championing key projects that drive industry competitiveness.
  - **Infrastructure and Incentive Programs** – Develop and implement “best practices” infrastructure and incentive programs that are responsive to the needs and opportunities in the San Joaquin Valley and maximize the impact of public resources.
  - **Renewable Energy** - Accelerate the growth of the emerging “renewable energy” industry and establish the San Joaquin Valley as a leader in the development and adoption of renewable energy technologies, such as energy efficiency, solar, biomass, and wind.
- **Feedback from breakout session participants on the proposed goals:**
  - **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development** – General agreement on the approach outlined in the overview report. No additional feedback.
  - **Competitiveness of Target Industries**
    - Make sure to include emerging industries and identify any “leapfrog” opportunities (i.e. ask the question, “What’s the next major economic opportunity for the region?”)
    - Include analysis of “neighbor region” economic opportunities (e.g. becoming a significant provider of healthcare training for the state; adding value to the “goods movement” challenges in the state; becoming a location for manufacturing/production of biotechnology instead of the production going outside of California).
    - Each industry that is targeted should include an assessment of international trade opportunities.
  - **Infrastructure and Incentive Programs**
    - Need to look at state policy enhancing/inhibiting infrastructure investment.
    - Look for Federal dollars to help fund identified infrastructure projects.

- Make sure to connect ideas/recommendations from the infrastructure subcommittee with the Land Use, Ag and Housing work group.
  - What about developing recommendations for a region-wide incentive zone?
- **Renewable Energy** – General agreement on the proposed goal in the overview report. No further comment.
- **Additional comments from the group:**
  - Need to focus more on rural economic opportunities (transportation issues are the primary issue in rural economic development).
  - Should consider the economic opportunities presented by the region's arts and culture (i.e. "Creative Class," quality of life/amenities)
  - Human capital and "talent" are the most critical ingredients for a competitive economy.
  - Should the group also consider regional marketing efforts? Regional marketing is simply a function of funding.
- **Process suggestion** – develop a template for all the work groups to use in developing their recommendations and action plans.

### **Higher Education and Workforce Development Discussion**

- **Goals outlined in the Higher Education and Workforce Development Overview Report:**
  - Expand vocational training capacity;
  - Improve effectiveness and efficiencies of local workforce investment agencies;
  - Increase college degree attainment;
  - Close gaps in accessibility of baccalaureate education; and
  - Establish the San Joaquin Valley as the state's leading producer of the full spectrum of health services professionals from entry level to physicians.
  - Align curriculum between the K-12 system and higher education and training to insure pathways for success.
- **Feedback from breakout session participants:**
  - Significant focus should be placed on making sure higher education and local training programs match local employment demand:
    - Need to identify the current utilization of training dollars and determine how much of those dollars are being spent in response to local employer demand for good paying jobs.
    - Need to develop a comprehensive way to identify employer demand throughout the region. WIBs also need to be able to effectively assess the skills of the workforce and then develop training programs that fill the gap between employer demand. Fresno, Modesto, Bakersfield were all mentioned as examples of communities which have such systems in place.
  - Make sure to include community colleges. Vocational education needs to be expanded in occupational families with good career ladders.
  - Availability of community colleges is a significant issue for some sub-regions. Need to investigate whether the "training infrastructure" is working in the region, including

WIBs and community colleges. Are the community college programs being sufficiently leveraged with one another?

- Ultimate goal is alignment of K-12, WIBs and higher education in response to employer demand.
  - Need to focus on target industries from the Economic Development Work Group and then identify “regional workforce development opportunities”. This should be added as a specific goal to the work plan.
  - An important component of the action plan will be “citizen action/outreach.” Make sure to include a community component that seeks to make the training opportunities widely accessible at the grassroots level.
- **Process suggestion** – Convene the Economic Development and Higher Education/Workforce Development work groups on a regular basis. Need to have tight interconnection between the two areas.
  - **Next Combined Meeting of the Economic Development and Higher Education/Workforce Development Work Groups** – November 3, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., UC Center in Fresno (Shaw Avenue and Fresno Street across from Fashion Fair Mall), agenda and other details to be determined.